



# The Catholic Virginian

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## New OCF director to expand outreach, resources

### Teresa Lee will draw upon parish experience to meet catechists' needs

**BRIAN T. OLSZEWSKI**  
The Catholic Virginian

**T**eresa Lee subscribes to the philosophy that one should be part of a solution, not part of the problem. She describes the way she handles matters as “concrete and practical.”

Together, those approaches provide context for how a person with a degree in business management from ODU and eight years in retail management, including stints at the department stores Miller & Rhodes and Thalhimers, became a religious educator, a parish director of religious education, a parish director of evangelization and, as of June 20, director of the Diocese of Richmond’s Office of Christian Formation.

The problem for which she wanted to be a solution followed her daughter’s first year in religious education.

“I was very unhappy with the way the program was when my oldest child — now 31 — was in kindergarten. It was a very negative environment,” Lee said. “I went to the director at the time and told her, ‘I’ll volunteer to be a catechist.’ I did not want to teach my daughter’s grade, so I began teaching second grade. I was a second grade catechist for many years.”

Lee credits Notre Dame Sister Bernadette Kenninger, the parish director of religious education, for mentoring her.

“She fostered in me the idea of being able to recognize people’s talent that maybe they can’t see themselves. She definitely saw something in me and encouraged me, not to just keep on volunteering, but to further my own faith development,” Lee said.

Recognizing what Lee could do as a religious educator, Sister Bernadette hired her as a coordinator — a decision that might have been providential.

“She passed away very unexpectedly, and so I was able to step in as director,” Lee said. “God was clearing this path and preparing me for this next step without me realizing it.”

#### Called to serve

Lee noted that as director she was not only entrenched in children’s religious education, but,



Teresa Lee

because “jobs were cobbled together,” she was also involved in middle school, youth ministry, confirmation preparation as well as all the children’s programs.

Although her degree in business “served me very well in this ministry,” according to Lee, she recognized the need for getting an education in theology. She entered the diocese’s Lay Ecclesial Ministry Institute (LEMI).

“That’s why in 2012, because of the opportunity the diocese offered, I decided to get my master’s degree, because at a certain point I wanted to go a step further beyond the work-

shops being offered,” Lee said, noting that the diocese’s financial support for LEMI students made it possible for her to enroll.

Earning a master’s degree in theology from St. Leo University in 2016 and being commissioned as a lay ecclesial minister in 2017 “opened up some doors for me,” Lee said.

Feeling “there wasn’t anywhere for me to go” at St. Bridget, she was ready for another ministry

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## Centennial celebration in South Hill



Mexican American youth perform a traditional folklore dance at Good Shepherd, South Hill, following the Mass celebrated for the parish’s centennial anniversary, Sunday, Aug. 28. Representatives of the diverse cultures who call the parish home contributed to the celebration. See story on Page 5. (Photo provided)

## Troubling numbers for Christianity

### US majority status might disappear by 2070

**MARK PATTISON**  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — If trends of the past 30 years continue for the next 50, Christianity will lose its majority status in the United States by 2070, according to a new demographic study by the Pew Research Center.

If those trends, first identified in 1990, accelerate over the next half-century, Christianity will have fewer adherents than Americans who are not affiliated with any church, according to the study, “Modeling the Future of Religion in America,” released Sept. 13.

Even with the demographic modeling used by Pew, the numbers vary widely.

Christians, put by Pew currently at 64% of the U.S. population, could slide to 54% or plunge to 35% — by 2070.

By the same token, the religiously unaffiliated called “nones” in some circles — currently at 29%, could rise to 34% of the population in the next half-century, or soar to 52%.

Pew used four different scenarios in making its projections. One was “no switching,” meaning that Americans would not switch from religious affiliation to disaffiliation, or vice versa. Its counterpart was “steady switching,” in which 31% of Christians become unaffiliated, while

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# In Eucharist, encounter Jesus, *become like him*



**CHRIST OUR HOPE**  
MOST REV. BARRY C. KNESTOUT

**W**ith our pastoral year well underway, and given the time, talent and resources our diocese and parishes commit to a variety of programs, ministries and various forms of outreach, it is important that in all we do, we recognize that the Eucharist is at the heart of it, that we accept Jesus' invitation to encounter him in this sacrificial meal.

As many of you know, there is concern within the Catholic community that, according to a 2019 Pew Research Center survey, 69% who self-identify as Catholics do not believe that the Eucharist is the Real Presence of Jesus Christ. We can lament that our catechesis on the Eucharist during the last half century has not been effective or we can renew our engagement with them in our catechetical efforts so that all Catholics recognize and accept what Christ desires for us. But we can't start there.

Rather, we can start by re-catechizing ourselves through prayer, eucharistic devotion and focused reflection of what we are doing and who we are receiving when we come forward at Communion. St. Augustine offered succinct but powerful instruction regarding

the Eucharist: "Behold what you are; become what you receive." When we receive the Body of Christ, we are encountering Jesus and accepting his invitation to become like him. We also know that in becoming like Jesus, we must be willing to heed what he told his disciples: "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me" (Mt 16:24).

In the apostolic letter "Desiderio Desideravi" regarding the liturgical formation of Catholics that Pope Francis issued on June 29, he wrote, "Christian faith is either an encounter with him alive, or it does not exist."

That encounter occurs at Mass. In Communion, Christ reaches out to us to heal us and strengthen us. He is the spiritual food that sustains us with his presence by our encounter with the Paschal Mystery.

Referencing the words of St. Augustine, our Holy Father notes that the Eucharist is a sacrament of mercy, a sign of unity and a bond of charity.

When we receive Communion, we are accepting the healing and mercy that Christ alone can give. Eucharist is a sacrament in which we receive his forgiveness. No matter how deep our pains and hurts are, he comes to heal them.

At the same time, it is a sacrament of unity capable of bringing us together when we recognize what separates us and causes tension

in our personal lives, families and communities — even, at times, our Church communities. In receiving the body of Christ, we are nourished to repair what harms and divides the Body of Christ.

As for Eucharist being a bond of charity, Pope Francis stated, "A celebration (of Mass) that does not evangelize is not authentic, just as a proclamation that does not lead to an encounter with the risen Lord in the celebration is not authentic. And then both of these, without the testimony of charity (emphasis added), are like sounding a 'noisy gong or a clanging cymbal' (1 Cor 13:1)."

Throughout the next two years, we will join with Catholics throughout the country in a Eucharistic Revival (<https://www.eucharisticrevival.org>). There will be multiple opportunities in our diocese and parishes for us to reflect on Eucharist as a source of grace, on our communion with God and our reverence for and adoration of it. Acceptance of Christ's longing to have this meal with us, this Communion with us, is our call to holiness — an instrument of mercy and forgiveness as much as it is an encounter with our Risen Lord.

This is an opportunity for us to be engaged in the fullness of Jesus' love for us in the Paschal Mystery. We will grow in holiness the more that we are immersed in Christ's holiness. In that immersion, we will receive the grace to grow in our communion with God.

## Pope calls for 'open, compassionate hearts'

Says religions must be purified of extremism, self-righteousness

JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES  
Catholic News Service

NUR-SULTAN, Kazakhstan — As war, violence and extremism in countries around the world threaten the lives of countless men, women and children, religions must rise above differences and be examples of peace and harmony, Pope Francis said.

"It is time to realize that fundamentalism defiles and corrupts every creed; time for open and compassionate hearts," the pope said Sept. 14 at the plenary session of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

"We need religion in order to respond to the thirst for world peace and the thirst for the infinite that dwells in the heart of each man and woman," he said.

On the second day of his visit to Kazakhstan, the pope addressed 80 religious leaders and hundreds of delegates participating in the interreligious meeting Sept. 14-15 in the Palace of Independence, a blue-glassed trapezoid-shaped building in the heart of the Kazakh capital, Nur-Sultan.

The congress, which is held every three years, was the initiative of Kazakhstan's first president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, as a way of promoting dialogue among religions, the congress' website stated. It also aims to prevent "the use of religious feelings of people for the escalation of conflicts and hostilities."

Arriving at the meeting, the pope took his place at a huge round table with the other leaders and was immediately greeted by Sheikh Ahmad el-Tayeb, grand imam of Al-Azhar in Egypt. Smiling, the pope affectionately embraced him.

After the formal session, Pope Francis held private meetings with a dozen of the leaders, including the sheikh, but also with Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, head of external relations for the Russian Orthodox Church. The metropolitan took the place of Russian Patriarch Kirill of Moscow, who canceled his attendance at the congress.

Metropolitan Anthony told reporters his 15-minute meeting with the pope was "very cordial" and that the pope had asked him to pass his greetings to the patriarch, whom the pope had hoped to meet in Nur-Sultan. The patriarch's withdrawal from the congress was seen by many observers as a protest of Pope Francis' decision not to meet Patriarch Kirill in Jerusalem in June because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and of Patriarch Kirill's support for the war.

"We had worked to prepare the second meeting (between a pope and patriarch — the first was in Havana in 2016), and then it was canceled by the Vatican," Metropolitan Anthony told reporters at the Palace of Independence. "We'll see what we can do" to arrange a

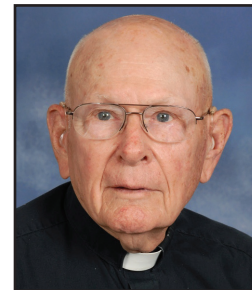
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*"We need religion in order to respond to the thirst for world peace and the thirst for the infinite that dwells in the heart of each man and woman."*

— Pope Francis

## IN MEMORIAM

### Deacon John Hardin Thomas



A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Deacon John Hardin Thomas on Thursday, Sept. 8, 2022, 11:30 a.m., at Church of the Epiphany, Richmond. Deacon Thomas, 95, died on Wednesday, Aug. 31.

Born in Long Beach, California, Deacon Thomas grew up in Rotan, Texas. He served in the United States Navy and became a Virginia state trooper. He graduated from law school and was later appointed to the bench as a juvenile and domestic relations judge in Chesterfield County. For many years after his retirement, he continued as a substitute judge.

A devout Catholic, Deacon Thomas was ordained to the permanent diaconate for the Diocese of Richmond on June 6, 1992. He served as a permanent deacon at Church of the Epiphany, Richmond, until age 85. He also served as chancellor of the Diocese of Richmond from 2007 to 2014.

Deacon Thomas is survived by his wife, Maralyn Thomas; daughter, Leah-Beth Williams (Gary Futrell); daughter, Linda (Bob) Copenhaver; son, Jay (Cathy) Thomas; and numerous grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Elizabeth Thomas; son, Robert Thomas; sister, Luleen Thomas; grandsons, Andrew Thomas and James Thomas; and son-in-law, Ralph Williams.

# Pastoral year solidified Father Wiggins' call to priesthood

## Retiree 'faithful to God, Church, people in the pews'

JANNA REYNOLDS  
The Catholic Virginian

At a priest convocation held in Williamsburg one year, Father Frank L. Wiggins was struck by a phrase he heard from a keynote speaker: "We are not called to be successful; we are called to be faithful."

"That always has stuck with me – being faithful not only to God and to the Church, but being faithful to the people in the pews," the priest said. "Success is not the issue; it's being faithful as Jesus called his disciples to be faithful."

Father Wiggins has dedicated himself to being a faithful priest to the people of God, serving as pastor and parochial vicar in each of the Diocese of Richmond's vicariates over the course of his 36 years of active ministry. He retired on July 1, 2022.

"It just seems like in one way, it's been a long journey, but in another way, it seems like I can't believe it's been 36 years. It's been a good haul. I've enjoyed the ministry," Father Wiggins said. "I just wanted to do the best I could do, and I think I succeeded with that."

A native of Roanoke, Father Wiggins was first raised in a Maronite church, where he was an altar server.

His parents attended Latin rite and Maronite services for a time. When they decided to attend the Maronite church full time, Father Wiggins stayed at the Latin rite church.

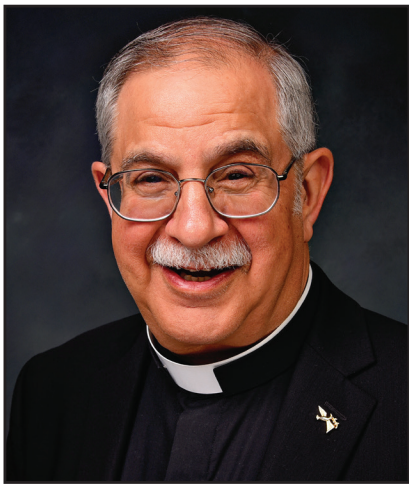
The Latin rite appealed to him "because it was younger kids and younger people, and I was more influenced by them," Father Wiggins said. In the Maronite church, he said, were "older people" who spoke languages with which he was not familiar, "so I gravitated to Our Lady of Nazareth."

### Vocational influences

The time he spent at that parish led to Father Wiggins' ultimate decision to become a priest, although it took him a while to get there. When he was "somewhere between 15 and 20" years old, "there started to be new priests there, a young priest, young deacons" who "kind of influenced" Father Wiggins to think about priesthood.

"The community was involved, too. They would say, 'You need to go to seminary' and 'You would be a good priest.' And of course, I was shy as could be. I looked around and thought, 'Who are they talking about?' Because I had no idea I wanted to do that," he said.

Over the next decade, Father Wiggins completed a two-year forestry degree and held multiple jobs in the secular world, mostly



Father Frank L. Wiggins

focused on the outdoors.

"It always came back to 'This job doesn't satisfy me, this job doesn't satisfy me, what will satisfy me?' Even though I was working and did a good job, I went to work every day and collected money, but there was something missing," he said.

He finally acknowledged he was missing out on "trying (priesthood) out." He returned to Roanoke College and graduated with a bachelor's degree in religion and philosophy in 1971.

The chaplain at the college, who was Lutheran, told Father Wiggins that he should go to the seminary because he would make an excellent priest.

"So they knew something that I didn't know, and I didn't accept it," he said. "I was trying to fight it, and I fought it for 10 years. And I thought, 'Woah, I need to wake up and see what they see.'"

So he enrolled at St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in Indiana.

The priest said, however, that even when he entered formation, he "struggled" with thoughts about how he would handle the lifestyle.

"I still didn't know what I wanted to do, whether this life was for me or not," he said. "I really wanted a family and kids, just like a normal person would want. Anybody would want that."

For three years at St. Meinrad, Father Wiggins remained undecided about priesthood, but eventually, "everything fell into place." The pastoral year he completed at Holy Family, Virginia Beach, with Father Jim Dorson was a "pivotal point" that helped him realize that priesthood was where he was called to serve.

"When I went back, I saw the seminary through different eyes, and I made better grades, and I saw it for what it was," he recalled. "I was much more happy when I made that decision to carry on, and one thing led to another, and I'm here."

He was ordained by Bishop Walter F. Sullivan on May 17, 1986.

### Starting a parish

After ministering for several years and while serving as pastor of St.

Richard, Emporia, Father Wiggins decided to pursue his Master of Social Work at Virginia Commonwealth University, which he obtained in 1997.

"I had this on my mind because I really didn't understand how to counsel people, especially married couples or single people. And so I felt like I was inadequate for that because I only had like 18 hours of basic psychology," he said. "I needed to be specialized in it so at least I'd know what to do, and if I didn't have an answer, I could refer them to whatever (they needed)."

A great accomplishment of his priesthood, according to Father Wiggins, was his role in establishing St. Peter the Apostle in Lake Gaston when he "had the opportunity to start a church from zero."

The priest was serving at St. Richard, Emporia, when he was approached by a few laypeople who were interested in starting a church in that area. A plan was presented to Bishop Sullivan, and a location for the church was secured – an abandoned bait and tackle shop that was used for several years before the current church was built in Ebony.

"We did a lot of sweat equity and brought people together to paint and reorganize to build the church up," Father Wiggins recalled. "I didn't have to pay anybody anything; everything was donated. So that began St. Peter the Apostle in Lake Gaston. Everyone pitched in, and that's a success story. I will never forget that."

### Scripture followed nature

As retired priests are not as-

signed to a parish, Father Wiggins said he will miss "the community and building up relationships," which was an integral part of his ministry.

"I've always been an advocate, you know. I may be preaching my work once a week, but it's a one-to-one conversation that you have with parishioners that really makes a difference," he said. "That's not easy to do... (but) that's where it starts."

Father Wiggins celebrated his retirement at St. John, Highland Springs, with more than 150 people who he has encountered over the course of his priesthood.

He said he will continue to serve people after he adjusts to the "major transition" of retirement and settles into his home on the Eastern Shore. There, he plans to become involved in the community of St. Charles, Cape Charles.

"I know the people there... it's still going to be a community where I can meet the people of God and serve them and go visit them, but that's going to take some time to do," Father Wiggins said.

During that time, the priest anticipates getting back into nature and returning to the outdoors. An avid gardener, he intends to work toward fulfilling his longtime desire of becoming a master gardener.

"I think it all makes sense to me now. Richard Moore said that the first Gospel was the creation, was nature, and that was interesting when I read that. I was in nature before I was following the Scripture," Father Wiggins said of the years he spent as a forester. "Nature was my first introduction to who God is. I always loved nature."

## Pope to youth: Share joy, love

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Like Mary, who after the Annunciation went in haste to visit her cousin Elizabeth, young Catholics are called to welcome Jesus into their lives and then to go out and share their joy with others, Pope Francis said. "Mary is an example of a young person who wastes no time on seeking attention or the approval of others — as often happens when we depend on our 'likes' on social media. She sets out to find the most genuine of all 'connections': the one that comes from encounter, sharing, love and service," the pope said in his message for World Youth Day.

The Gospel of Luke's description of what Mary did after learning she would become the mother of Jesus — "Mary

arose and went with haste" to Elizabeth — is the theme Pope Francis chose for two WYD celebrations: on a local level Nov. 20, the feast of Christ the King, and for the world gathering in Lisbon, Portugal, Aug. 1-6, 2023. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Lisbon gathering was postponed from 2022.

Pope Francis said he hoped many young Catholics would gather in the Portuguese city and that it would "represent a new beginning for you, the young, and — with you — for humanity as a whole."

In the Gospel story of the Visitation, the pope said, Mary "is a model for young people on the move, who refuse to stand in front of a mirror to contemplate themselves or to get caught up in the 'net.'"



# Faith inspires anti-nuclear arms advocates' mission

## Hampton Roads' group educates, makes appeals to civic leaders

JENNIFER NEVILLE

Special to The Catholic Virginian

Members of Hampton Roads Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (HRCAN) might be going against the grain, especially since they live in an area with shipyards that build and maintain nuclear-armed submarines, but, believing in the peace message of the Scriptures, their hearts tell them they need to advocate for nuclear disarmament.

They also cite global community safety, the environment, the need to divest the trillions of dollars spent on nuclear weapons to pay for social justice efforts and that no one can win a nuclear war as reasons.

"I think that the reason I'm involved in it is because faith calls me to. If I take seriously Jesus' call to follow him, everything he did was non-violent," said Kathy Early, a parishioner of Holy Spirit, Virginia Beach, who has also been protesting war since the Iraq War began.

She added that she also "just cares about the world," especially since she has eight grandchildren.

"The possibility that their whole world could just be annihilated just breaks my heart to say nothing of the devastation to the Earth that would cause crops not to grow and people will starve to death. I mean, the list just goes on and on," she said.

### 'God's project in the crosshairs'

Steve Baggarly, a parishioner at Basilica of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Norfolk, who has been advocating against nuclear weapons since the 1980s and has been jailed several times for protests in different states and Washington, D.C., expressed a similar sentiment.

"It's important work because nuclear weapons put God's entire project in the crosshairs. Everything that God loves and created; everything that we love, everyone that we love is in the nuclear crosshairs, and if that's not blasphemy, I don't know what is," he said.

"So doing good and opposing evil is what Jesus calls us to," Baggarly continued. "I think one glaring evil in the world is humanity's accumulation of nuclear weapons and our insistence that we're going to use them if we have to... and someday somebody is going to make good on that claim for being credible, and we'll be in a world of ashes," Baggarly said.

As Holy Spirit parishioner Lucy Yatsko, who has been interested in peace since she was a child, said, "I was taught in Catholic schools to be a conscious citizen of the world, to do positive things, to listen to the Sermon on the Mount and not to be hopeless or complacent. Should we be held by the idea that we are a nu-

clear giant and infant when it comes to ethics? When we read the Gospel, we must read the newspaper to see the work we are called to."

Several HRCAN members said they have nothing against the military. In fact, Baggarly said he is concerned about the people who have to "push the button" to launch a nuclear war should the order come, and Yatsko said that her distress is with the "issue," not military members.

### Pope Francis leads the way

HRCAN is a partner organization to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 for its part in bringing the

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) to fruition, explained Baggarly.

Pope Francis has called the mere possession of nuclear weapons immoral, and the Vatican was among the first United Nations members to sign the treaty, which entered into force on Jan. 22, 2021. Sixty-six nations have ratified it according to ICAN's website.

A collection of people, including members of the Norfolk Catholic Worker and Pax Christi Hampton Roads, started the interdenominational HRCAN in 2017 with the mission to promote the TPNW by "educating political and religious leaders and the general public to

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Archbishop John C. Wester of Santa Fe, N.M., offers a reflection on the urgent need for nuclear disarmament during a prayer service for United Nations diplomats at the Church of the Holy Family in New York City Sept. 12, 2022. The service, hosted by the Vatican's permanent observer mission to the U.N., was held on the eve of the opening of the 77th session of the U.N. General Assembly. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Bishop Barry C. Knestout will celebrate

# Mass of Hope & Healing

**St. Bede Catholic Church • Thursday, October 6, 2022 • 7p.m.**

3686 Ironbound Rd, Williamsburg, VA 23188

You are invited to come and pray for victim survivors of child sexual abuse and their families.

Counselors will be available before and after Mass.

"The horrors that victim survivors face are never to be minimized – but what they teach us from the depths of their strength is a gift that is of great value to all of us" — Paul Ashton, PhD

Please note: Photographs will be taken during the liturgy but only of the altar and bishop. Photos may be used for digital and print communications of The Catholic Diocese of Richmond.



Light refreshments will be served after Mass. For information, contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator at 804-622-5175



# 'Little church in the field' now a thriving Catholic community

## Diverse South Hill parish celebrates centennial

WENDY KLESCH

Special to The Catholic Virginian

When Bishop Denis J. O'Connell dedicated Good Shepherd, South Hill, on August 27, 1922, he compared the small, white frame church to a mustard seed, that smallest of seeds that grows into a tree large enough for birds to nest in its branches.

"From small things grow great ones," Good Shepherd parish council chairperson Jimmy Walters said. "From a small church comes great faith."

One hundred years later, Good Shepherd has a congregation of around 200 people of all walks of life, with roots all over the world, from Northern Virginia to Nigeria.

"The parish is very multicultural," said Father Raner Lucila, pastor of Good Shepherd. "We have Hispanics, Filipinos, Africans, Anglos. It's so diverse, but they are so united somehow. The people all want something good for the parish. Their hearts are full of what is good for the community, and they work on that together."

That spirit of many hands, one body, was reflected in the parish's centennial celebration, held Sunday, Aug. 28. The day featured music, dancing and food from several traditions representing the congregation's heritage, all preceded by a Mass concelebrated by Bishop Barry C. Knestout and Father Lucila.

### Growing, growing, growing

Before the founding of Good Shepherd, Catholics in the area gathered once a month to celebrate Mass in their homes with the aid of a priest who traveled by train from Danville.

In 1922, Catherine Rudolph donated an acre of land on State Route 138 — three-and-one-half miles from South Hill — for the construction of a church, thereby planting the seeds for a new community.

"She persuaded many of her neighbors to volunteer their labor and materials," Walters said. "She was instrumental in getting the parish going."

The church was completed by the end of the summer: a black-and-white photo depicts it as it was in those early days, standing in a field of dried sunflowers.

By the fall of 1940, Bishop Peter Ireton invited the Franciscan Fathers of New York to take charge of Good Shepherd, which was a mission church of St. Richard, Emporia, at that time. Father Walter Hammon was the first Franciscan to celebrate Mass in South Hill in 1941.

As the parish flourished, it soon outgrew the little church in the field, and so, on Sunday, May 10, 1953, ground was broken for a new parish home to be built on U.S. Highway 1, two miles north of South Hill. The ceremony took place after the 10 o'clock Mass with about 50 parishioners and Father Kieran McMahon in attendance, according to a local newspaper article of the time.

The second Church of the Good Shepherd, a red brick church with oak pews, opened its doors that Christmas Eve, with the celebration of Midnight Mass.

South Hill was made its own parish in 1979, and by the 1990s, it needed more room.

"It was getting so that people were circled



Bishop Barry C. Knestout receives the gifts from parishioners of Good Shepherd, South Hill, during the parish's 100th anniversary Mass on Sunday, Aug. 28. The bishop concelebrated the Mass with Father Raner Lucila, parish pastor. (Photo provided)

all around and couldn't see around the piano," Walters said, laughing.

A social hall was built in 1995; there, volunteers hosted bingo games to raise funds for a new church, which was built right alongside of the old one, turning the original building into a wing, in 2006.

"Today, it's used as a classroom space for the children's religious education classes," Walters said, so that the second church still shares in the life of the parish.

### Local, international service

Over the past 100 years, Good Shepherd has had 29 pastors and 23 parochial vicars, so liturgical minister Laura Bailey, along with a group of volunteers, work hard to keep ministries going.

"I know where everything is," Bailey said, "so I try to be that stable presence."

The parish has a food ministry, open every Tuesday, and also maintains a global outreach program, offering support to St. Joseph Busibo Church in the Diocese of Masaka, Uganda. Father John Kazibwe, pastor of Good Shepherd from 2009 to 2013, who was from that diocese, told them of the need, Bailey explained. Since then, Good Shepherd has raised money to build a church for the parish and for two large cisterns to collect water.

"We are a mission parish," Bailey said. "We are not a wealthy parish. Many of the projects have been funded through the generosity of contributors. But we've done it well and we've been very dedicated."

"There's been challenges, being a small parish," she said. "But it's been wonderful. What better thing than to serve?"

Parishioner Alma Gutierrez, who has called Good Shepherd home for more than 20 years, volunteers by helping with the Spanish Mass celebrated each Saturday night.

"My dad brought us here when we moved from Mexico, in 1999," she said. "I was confirmed here, and now my oldest daughter has just had her first Communion."

"What I love most about being Catholic, and about this parish, is the beautiful, different cultures that we have," she said. "We're from Mexico, and we gather at this church, the Anglos gather at this church, there are a few families from Nigeria who gather here, the Filipino community gathers here. It's amazing how we are all from different parts of the world, but we all come together as one."

### Opportunity for renewal

Parishioners hope that the anniversary celebration will serve to reinvigorate the parish in the wake of the pandemic, to strengthen its roots and help it to flourish.

"We have had some people who have not yet come back," Bailey said. "We have many elderly parishioners who have concerns, so that's understandable."

The parish's longtime prison ministry has been suspended over the past few years, Father Lucila said, "but we are trying to bring that back again" by gathering a team to provide pastoral care to Lunenburg Correctional Center.

Volunteers with the parish's migrant ministry are working with the diocese to restart its work as well, Gutierrez said.

"Our community is not as big as it used to be, but we are working to get them back," she said.

"It's a hard time, it's hard times right now. We're in an age when people don't want to talk about God. But we are trying to be sure to invite the people back again, for the anniversary," she said. "It's been exciting. People are calling and asking, 'What can I bring?'"

Event organizers kept the spirit of the diverse but close-knit community in mind, Walters said, in planning the anniversary gathering. The event included games, entertainment and music, and representatives from each culture prepared presentations.

"It's home," Gutierrez said. "And it's been such a blessing to me. That's what amazes me about being Catholic. What's such a blessing about this church is that we all gather together to celebrate."

Sharing the faith with your children?

Check out the Kids' Section at [www.catholicvirginian.org](http://www.catholicvirginian.org).



# Prepare your conscience for the midterm election

## GUEST COMMENTARY

TOM KLOCEK

Early voting in Virginia begins Thursday, Sept. 23. Now is time to review our duties and responsibilities as Catholics in the public square.

Many complex and important issues face voters in this midterm election. The overturning of *Roe v. Wade* makes these elections even more important. This decision did not outlaw abortion; it merely returned the responsibility to regulate abortions to the people of the various states, increasing the significance of many state and local elections.

Our responsibility as citizens and Catholics calls us to have properly formed consciences, a continuous process based on Scripture and Church teaching. Catholic organizations, dioceses, parishes and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) publish various documents and guides to help, including the USCCB document, "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship." We are obligated to follow our properly formed consciences meaning our efforts should be directed at the common good.

We need this regular review because man's conscience "by degrees grows practically sightless as a result of habitual sin" ("Gaudium

*"In the depths of his conscience, man detects a law ... always summoning him to love good and avoid evil, the voice of conscience [which] speaks to his heart..."*

"GAUDIUM ET SPES"

et Spes") as is evident by what is occurring in society and the Church.

The issues include abortion, euthanasia, in-vitro fertilization, human cloning and research on human embryos — all intrinsic evils which can never be supported. "One may never do evil so that good may result from it." (Catechism of the Catholic Church #1789)

These are sins. Being compassionate toward sinners does not mean we condone their sin. An intrinsic evil is something that, by its very nature, is evil. Abortion is an intrinsic evil because it takes an innocent life and harms the mother.

Other important issues include the family, religious freedom, freedom of speech, homosexual activities (not inclination, the action is the sin), transgender mutilation — especially of minors, racism, poverty, etc.

We must also look at the background information about potential choices. While an issue like immigration and border security may seem straightforward, one must consider the effects of open borders, e.g., drug trafficking, crime, human trafficking, on the common good.

Consider which candidate or party supports:

- Intrinsic evils?
- Church and societal interests, i.e., religious freedom, school choice, free speech, etc.?
- The sanctity of the family? The elderly? Marriage and marital relations?
- Truth and transparency? Personal responsibility?
- The fullness of human sexuality as taught by the Church, e.g., the complementarity of the sexes, reality of birth gender, etc.?

Consider these thoughts:

"The refusal to take sides on great moral issues is itself a decision. It is a silent acquiescence to evil." — Bishop Fulton Sheen

"It is obvious that truth cannot be created through ballots. A statement is either true or false. Truth can only be found, not created." — Then-Cardinal Josef Ratzinger, the future Pope Benedict XVI.

*Klocek, a 1969 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, a retired naval officer and a Fourth Degree Knight of Columbus, is a member of St. Stephen, Martyr, Parish, Chesapeake.*

# Show your love, support for catechists

## GUEST COMMENTARY

HOSFFMAN OSPINO  
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Catechetical programs have resumed activities or will soon start in most Catholic parishes in the United States. Children, youth, young adults and adults prepare to return to sessions where they will learn and reflect about their faith.

Just as we speak of the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist, as essential to nurture our spiritual life, catechesis is essential to nurture our love for our faith and for God's word.

Central to the work of catechesis are the many women and men of all ages who exercise their discipleship by serving their communities as catechists. They are missionary disciples who understand the importance of passing on the faith.

Although the first and most essential catechists, especially for children and youth, are the parents and other adults who live in a household, catechists expand and enhance that first catechesis by sharing their faith in small groups.

In many cases, catechists play a remedial role, mindful that many parents fall short in sharing the basics of the faith at home with the younger ones.

If you look at the catechists in

your parish, you will notice that there is not necessarily a specific profile that restricts this important ministry to a narrow group. We want catechists to be witnesses of what they believe, do their best modeling their faith through their actions and share the faith with joy.

However, these expectations apply practically to all the baptized. We all are called to be catechists.

Stay-at-home moms and dads, teachers, doctors, nurses, lawyers, farmworkers, administrators, retirees, young adults, grandparents, tour guides, hotel and factory workers, taxi drivers, academics, cooks, nuns, priests, deacons, married couples, single people, among many others, join the ranks of catechists in our parishes every year.

What do all these people have in common? We all love our faith, and we all are passionate to share it with others! Nearly all of us do it as volunteers. This is what makes being part of a faith community exciting.

The Holy Spirit moves the hearts of the baptized, regardless of our background or social location, and inspires us to build the Church as catechists.

While there are many Catholics who love to share our faith as catechists, the numbers are not always enough. We need many more catechists, and thus we have a responsibility to encourage one another to serve our faith communities in this capacity.

At the same time, we should avoid taking our catechists for granted. Our faith communities need to cultivate a permanent culture of support for our catechists. Here are four practical ways in which we can support this important group.

Pray for our catechists. This is perhaps the easiest way of supporting them. Pray for their wisdom and wellbeing. Pray for their families. Pray for their holiness.

Second, approach a catechist in your faith community and say, "Thank you." It does not take much effort or time. A word of gratitude is always the best way to encourage others to move forward in what they are doing.

Third, sponsor a catechist or your parish religious education

program. Catechists are very generous with their time and expect nothing in return. Yet, we can be gratefully supportive.

Buy a book for them, bring a gift certificate, contribute to a fund to buy coffee or tea when they catechize. Make an annual or monthly donation to support their meetings and retreats.

Fourth, support the continuing education of your catechists. Catechists need constant training. Support a formation program for catechists in your parish or diocese. Some may be ready to study theology at a local seminary or university, and they need scholarships. You can help.

*Hosffman Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College.*

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# Faith community is living testament of Salem parish's history

## Our Lady of Perpetual Help celebrates 75th anniversary

KAREN ADAMS

Special to The Catholic Virginian

In 1947, the determination of eight women who had gathered signatures to petition for a Catholic church in Salem paid off in the establishment of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (OLPH) Parish. On Sunday, Sept. 11, OLPH honored its 75th anniversary with a special Mass concelebrated by Bishop Barry C. Knestout, area clergy and former pastors. The parish's annual picnic followed.

"God writes straight with our crooked lines," Bishop Knestout said in his homily, quoting an adage. He was referring to the long path to establishing the Salem church, as well as the long path traveled by the venerated icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, the parish's patroness. The image shows the Blessed Mother comforting the Christ Child.

He explained how the Eastern icon, created by a monk on the island of Crete and now housed in Rome, is associated with the Redemptorist priests, who celebrated the early Masses in Salem.

city of Roanoke, approximately 10 miles away.

In fall 1946, certain that there were enough Catholics in Salem to establish a parish, the eight "founding mothers" convinced the Diocese of Richmond's Bishop Peter Ireton to allow Masses to be held starting the next year. They would be celebrated by Redemptorists who came from St. Gerard Parish, Roanoke, about six miles away, a new church founded to serve the Black Catholic population – thus making OLPH a mission of St. Gerard.

In the beginning, Masses were held in the chapel at Roanoke College in Salem, sometimes for as few as 20 families.

In 1949, upon donated land near Lake Spring Park and its duck pond on Main Street, a small, white Army chapel was bought and relocated from Camp Butner in North Carolina. This chapel, where a Burger King now sits, was home for the growing OLPH parish until 1973, when a church was built on Turner Road.

The late Lena Givens was

mined," Givens said, adding that his father, Carl Givens of Craig County, was not Catholic but was very supportive of his wife.

"I feel very proud of what she did," Givens said.

Parishioner Danny Cobb, whose mother, the late Pat Cobb, was in the original women's group, has attended OLPH all his life. Like the parish, he is 75 years old.

"My mother was headstrong, and she loved the Catholic Church," he said, adding that she was from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and his father, Thomas Cobb, was from Bedford. "He wasn't raised Catholic, but he was one of the first to join the new church. My father talked about how my mother and the other ladies really stuck together to get the church founded."

Cobb's wife, Joyce, met her husband in 1967, started attending church with him and became a Catholic. Two years later, they held their wedding at the white chapel that was OLPH.

"Danny likes to tell people we were married where the grill is at Burger King," she said with a laugh.

Joyce also wrote a commemorative booklet on the history of OLPH for the 70th anniversary. "We were afraid people would forget how our church started and all it's been through over the years."

Father Ken Shuping arrived as OLPH's pastor on Pentecost in 2016, the fifth pastor in five years, and remained there until July 2021, making him the longest-serving pastor the church has had.

"When I arrived, they needed some stability, and I was lucky enough to stay there," he recalled. "It's small enough that people are involved in things. It's a wonderful, positive community where people can practice and grow in their faith. And there is a definite Marian spirituality there."

His message to OLPH on its anniversary: "Keep praying and looking toward the future."

Father Julio Reyes, parochial

vicar for OLPH and St. Gerard Parishes, celebrates a Spanish Mass at OLPH on Sunday afternoons.

"They have a good spirit of friendship there and are very welcoming," said Father Reyes, who came to the area in July. "They



In 1949, Our Lady of Perpetual Help began holding Mass in an Army chapel on Main Street that was purchased and relocated from Camp Butner in North Carolina. The chapel was home for the parish until 1973. (Photo/Karen Adams)



Bishop Barry C. Knestout concelebrates the 75th anniversary Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Salem, with former pastors and area clergy on Sunday, Sept. 11, 2022. The vestment worn by the bishop, given to the parish years ago, depicted a likeness of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. (Photo/Brenda Holtzlander)

"It is a sacramental; it is an image that conveys grace," he said, speaking to a crowd of about 300. "Our Lady is very much our mother and cares for us."

Bishop Knestout also pointed out the colorful image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help printed on the vestment he wore that Sunday, which had been given to the parish years ago.

Before 1947, Salem's Catholic families drove east to attend Mass at St. Andrew or Our Lady of Nazareth parishes in the larger

president of the Salem Catholic Women's Club, the group that organized the church founding. Her son, Joe Givens, was 7 years old when he started attending OLPH's Masses with his mother in 1947.

"Mother and I had been going to St. Andrew's in Roanoke, but it was a long way in those days," he said. "She and the other ladies petitioned the bishop to have a church here."

She came from Highland County, converted to Catholicism in the 1930s and "was very deter-

are open to helping other people, work well together and are very close to each other."

Father Danny Cogut, pastor of OLPH and St. Gerard since July 2021, also noted the kindness of the Salem parish. Three ministries in particular – a longtime Haiti ministry, a quarterly collection of baby items for families in need, and Family Promise – have devoted support from parishioners.

"People are very generous and caring at OLPH," he said. "And even though it's the smallest parish in the Roanoke Valley, some people are drawn for that reason, and they get to know each other."

Alluding to the remarkable, faith-driven history of his Marian parish, he quoted the Memorare, which also was sung during the anniversary Mass:

"Never was it known that anyone who fled to you, who asked for help, who sought your intercession was left unaided."



# 'God's mailman' delivered Gospel with a smile

## Pope John Paul I beatified

CAROL GLATZ  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — As the sainthood cause of Blessed John Paul I reached a major milestone with his beatification at the Vatican in early September, promoters and supporters of his cause hope his legacy continues to get the attention it deserves.

His brief pontificate did not do justice to a man who excelled as a gifted catechist, communicator and shepherd in his 23 years as a priest in the Italian Alps, 12 years as bishop in the pre-Alpine hills and eight years as patriarch of Venice, said Stefania Falasca, vice postulator of his cause.

Known as “the smiling pope,” “the humble pope,” and “the pope who talked to children,” Blessed John Paul’s 34 days as pontiff are just the tip of the iceberg, she said. She and others spoke at a Vatican news conference ahead of his Sept. 4 beatification.

His sainthood cause brought together so many pieces of evidence, background and direct testimonies regarding his 43 years of ordained ministry that they have finally been able to build a complete “reconstruction” of this figure, who was beatified for his lifetime of holiness, not his few weeks as pope, Falasca said.

He could have been “a dock worker” or a “garbage collector,” she said. His holiness depended not on his job, but on always living and communicating “the essence of the Gospel” and doing it in an extraordinary way.

Cardinal Beniamino Stella, postulator of Blessed John Paul’s cause, said the 19 years of meticulous historical research needed for the cause allowed for an official and “the first complete biography” of his life, published this year, “I Am the Dust.” The title comes from a favorite saying of the blessed, reflecting the way he saw himself as an instrument of God.

The official biography joins a growing collection of newly published works that are seeking to make these collected materials, especially those never-before-published, more accessible to the general public. Even the Vatican website has all of his papal talks translated into English, Spanish and other languages: a true rarity for papal remarks before 1996.

One book, “Giocare con Dio: Catechesi senza mitra” (“Playing with God: Catechesis Without the Miter”), is a collection of very short imaginative stories, anecdotes and allegories written by Blessed John Paul to spark reflection

and lessons about life and faith, a creative flair for which he was famous.

One allegory, titled “Why, Mommy?” details a back-and-forth conversation between a busy mother and her young child, who asks, “Mommy, why don’t you want to play with me?” “Because I don’t have time.” “Why don’t you have time?” “Because I am working!” “And why are you working?” “Because I have to earn money!” “And why do you have to earn money?” “So I can feed

you!” “But mommy, I’m not hungry!”

Elected Aug. 26, 1978, Blessed John Paul brought the quick quips and a storytelling form of preaching with him to Rome as pope, making an immediate impact on and heartfelt connection with his listeners.

He never picked up the papal tiara and he finally dropped the “royal We,” speaking directly in the first person with the

endearing air of chatting with a friend. At his first Angelus address, he began simply, “Yesterday morning I went to the Sistine Chapel to vote tranquilly. Never could I have imagined what was about to happen!”

It wasn’t just the everyday Catholic who was touched by his familiarity, gentleness and deep love for God and his Gospel.

His priests, family members, fellow bishops and cardinals were all similarly struck, especially by his ability to be kind and firm and demanding, as evidenced in another new book, “Il Postino di Dio” (“God’s Mailman”), illustrating the way he saw himself as a “carrier” of God’s word to the faithful.

This book collects the testimonies of several cardinals, including retired Pope Benedict XVI, who was one of the 111 cardinals who elected Italian Cardinal Albino Luciani as Pope John Paul I.

“Personally, I am totally convinced that he was a saint, because of his great goodness, simplicity, humanity and courage,” then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger said in an interview in 2003.

Beatifying him in St. Peter’s Square, Pope Francis said, “Let us pray to him, our father and our brother, and ask him to obtain for us ‘the smile of the soul’ that is “transparent, that does not deceive.”

“Let us pray, in his own words, ‘Lord take me as I am, with my defects, with my shortcomings, but make me become what you want me to be.’”

*Editor’s note: Blessed John Paul I’s talks as pope can be found at [vatican.va/content/john-paul-1/en.html](http://vatican.va/content/john-paul-1/en.html). More complete collection: [fondazionevaticanagpi.va/en.html](http://fondazionevaticanagpi.va/en.html).*



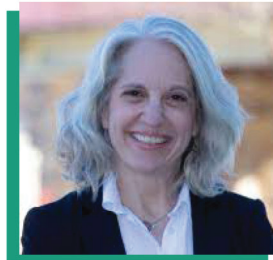
Pope John Paul I

# AGEISM UNMASKED

## Exploring Age Bias and How to End It

### Thursday, September 29

### 6 PM - 7 PM



LOCATION:

St. Mary’s Catholic Church  
9505 Gayton Road  
Richmond, VA

**Dr. Tracey Gendron**, chair of the Department of Gerontology at VCU and executive director of the Virginia Center on Aging, will discuss topics from her book and share strategies to help create an anti-ageist society.

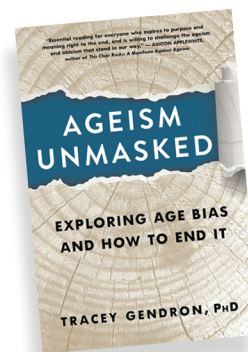
**Join us for a pre-event reception at St. Mary’s Woods before the discussion!**

**4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.**

Refreshments and light hors d’oeuvres.

Community tours will be available.

*Please park at St. Mary’s Catholic Church where a shuttle will be provided.*



**Tracey will answer audience questions and sign copies of her book, which will be available for purchase.**

**RSVP to Connie Salinas at 804-360-1960.**

A free public event sponsored by:

**Our Lady of Hope Health Center**  
[ourladyofhope.com](http://ourladyofhope.com)

**St. Mary’s Woods Retirement Community**  
[stmaryswoods.com](http://stmaryswoods.com)



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# God's love endures through kindness of ordinary people



IN LIGHT OF FAITH  
BARBARA HUGHES

One of the joys of being a spiritual director is the privilege of listening, learning and being inspired by people in all walks of life and numerous faith traditions. This morning, as I thought about a topic for this column, I found myself reflecting on the generosity of so many who mirror the love of God in ways that often go unnoticed.

For me, it serves as an ongoing reminder that the grace of God is at work in people everywhere and that the Good News is being preached by ordinary people every day. In a world that seems to focus on the negative, ready to name and shame anyone who makes a misstep, it's important for Christians to accentuate the positive and to share stories that inspire others.

The other day I learned of a young mother who gave birth to her infant who died shortly after birth. From the beginning of the pregnancy, the couple knew the baby's chances of survival were slight, yet they never once considered abortion as an option. As heart wrenching as the death of her infant was,

this young mother pumped her breasts for several months after the baby died, donating her breast milk to the local children's hospital for the infants in the intensive care unit. Such selfless love is as edifying as it is rare in a day and age where posters and angry voices shout, "It's my body."

Another source of inspiration came from a woman who loved and cared for her husband with Alzheimer's for three years preceding his death. As the illness progressed, she spent months sleeping at the top of the stairs to ensure his safety in the event that he might awaken during the night, wander and fall down the stairs.

Godly love abounds whenever compassionate presence sheds its light on a world too often characterized by cynicism. Sometimes charity takes on a more subtle presence. One such occurrence took place during a meeting I attended. When a member made a disparaging remark about a person not in attendance, one person spoke up and said, "I'm not comfortable talking about him since he's not here today."

It didn't take long for those sitting around the table to get the message. His example has often made me think twice when I'm

tempted to make an unkind remark about a person with whom I happen to disagree.

Scripture continues to be written in the lives of people everywhere. All we need to do is take the time to notice. Stories of kindness that reflect the love of God are the glue that holds people together, which makes Scripture the greatest story ever told. It was an art form that Jesus mastered, which is why his parables continue to touch hearts and minds. That's the beauty of storytelling! They teach without intimidating, and convict without accusing.

A good storyteller invites listeners to examine their hearts and minds in the ensuing silence where God transforms and recreates souls in his image. Stories allow each person to draw from them what is needed to deepen their understanding and experience of God. However, for this to happen, we must be willing to listen rather than speak.

Just as we repeat and reflect on the stories of people in Scripture, so we should repeat and reflect on how God's love shines forth in people whom we encounter, regardless of ethnicity or religious tradition. Like Jesus who praised the faith exhibited by the Syrophenician

woman and the Roman centurion, we're called to look beyond the smallness of self-imposed boundaries, be less judgmental and strive to see the presence of God in each person — especially those who are different from us, or whose experience of God is unlike our own.

St. Paul wrote, "Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart" (1 Cor 4:5).

In the book "City of God," St. Augustine concluded: "Many existing Church members would not be found to be members in the City of God. Similarly, there were some who never belonged to the Church who would be found to be members of that city."

It's a warning that we should take to heart when tempted to disparage others, for as St. John of the Cross reminds us, "In the end, we will be judged by the way we love."

And so, we pray, "Lord, teach us to love."

*Barbara Hughes is an author, retreat facilitator and spiritual guide. She lives in Virginia Beach and can be reached at brhughes16@gmail.com.*

## Gain wealth on Earth by seeking Jesus in others



BELIEVE AS  
YOU PRAY  
MELANIE CODDINGTON

In this Sunday's Gospel, we see one pair of Luke's Beatitudes played out in story form. The two lines — "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God" (Lk 6:20) and "Woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation" (Lk 6:24) — take on flesh in the parable of the unnamed rich man and the poor man, Lazarus.

So, too, our ears ring with an echo of Mary's Magnificat: "He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty" (Lk 1:52-53).

Today's text dramatizes the contrast between the daily life of the rich man and that of Lazarus. "Purple garments and fine linen" clothe the former, while sores cover the latter; the one dines sumptuously, while the other longs for scraps but goes hungry.

Lazarus lies at the rich man's door. Disabled in some way, he cannot even beg for what he needs. Licked by stray dogs but ignored by the rich man, Lazarus dies.

That is not the end of the story. In death, Lazarus is lifted up and the rich man cast down. The drama continues in a desperate dialogue between the "netherworld" and the "bosom of Abraham."

Ancient Mediterranean culture understood wealth to be limited in quantity and already distributed. It viewed anyone who acquired more with suspicion; people assumed surplus wealth to be ill-gotten.

**26th Sunday in  
Ordinary Time  
Am 6:1a, 4-7;  
Ps 146:7, 8-9, 9-10;  
1 Tm 6:11-16; Lk 16:19-31**

To counter this suspicion and maintain honor in society, a wealthy person was expected to give alms, to act as a patron to needy clients. Financial windfall quickly distributed posed no threat to honor. Greedy behavior diminished it.

This ancient cultural arrangement might strike us as unrealistic — for we live and move in a profit-driven system. Like fish in water, we might easily swim with little awareness of our economic environment, its effect on us or our power to affect it. Though we may grumble at obvious greed we observe, we resist knowing too much about the consequences of our own decisions and actions.

Today's reading from Amos calls affluent persons with this see-no-evil attitude complacent and prophesies an end to their "wanton revelry."

Most of us can hardly be considered "wanton" in our relationship to wealth. We manage as best we can in difficult times and share as

we are able. Yet these readings challenge us to open our eyes wider, to recognize the human dignity of the poor ones at our door and cross the threshold of our security in response to their need.

In Psalm 146, the Lord God sets the example for those who would claim the relationship of covenant. This One keeps faith, secures justice, gives food, liberates captives, protects strangers and sustains the most vulnerable. In his life and ministry, Jesus embodies this generous mercy modeled by the Father.

St. Paul's letter to Timothy exhorts the young "man of God" to pursue virtues made manifest in just action toward others. The "commandment" he must keep, implied rather than spelled out, might reasonably be, "You shall love the Lord, your God... and your neighbor as yourself" (Lk 10:27), or "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36).

All of this brings to my mind the parable of the last judgment (Mt 25:31-46), wherein Jesus places sheep on his right and goats on his left and explains the consequences of our actions or inactions. He challenges us to respond to persons in need with an investment of presence and compassion: to give food and drink, welcome strangers, clothe the naked, and visit the sick and imprisoned.

This challenge comes with a promise: When we get close enough to touch, we will encounter Christ in these sisters and brothers, and they will meet him in us.

*Melanie holds a master's in pastoral studies from Loyola University, New Orleans.*



# Richmond exhibit features Sistine Chapel ceiling art

EMILY JANSEN  
The Catholic Virginian

For those who cannot make it to Rome, and even for those who can, an opportunity to view the work of Michelangelo is available in Richmond through Sunday, Oct. 9.

“Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel: The Exhibition” is on display at the Stony Point Fashion Park.

The exhibit showcases 34 frescoes from the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel reproduced using high-definition photography. While those who visit the original frescoes in Rome can only look at the ceiling from below, the Sistine Chapel show allows for viewers to closely examine the reproductions.

The exhibition is produced by SEE Global Entertainment, which has toured other global exhibitions, including Star Trek, King Tut and Frida Kahlo. The Michelangelo production show has appeared nationally and internationally.

While some may wonder how the exhibit of reproductions compare to the original paintings in Rome, some viewers found the experience much more fruitful when it came to Richmond.

Mil Bailey, who had visited the Sistine Chapel years ago, found the touring display more authentic than viewing the real thing. Instead of feeling rushed through crowds and viewing the paintings from below, Bailey was able to have a slower and more personal experience. Not only could she view the paintings from only a foot away, but she was also able to learn about Michelangelo’s process with the detailed signs and audio provided by the exhibit.

“Now I understand the background of what he was trying to depict,” Bailey said.

Gen Cutchin, long-time parishioner at St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen, was impressed by the exhibit. Multiple times, she remarked on the brightness of the colors in the reproductions. While the images stayed true to time and retained the cracks in the paint that exist in the frescoes, the colors themselves were vibrant and saturated, allowing viewers to cut through the dust collected over the centuries and see the ceiling as Michelangelo would have painted it.

The exhibition, which takes anywhere from 60 to 90 minutes to view, also provides viewers the historical context and scholarship surrounding Michelangelo’s work.

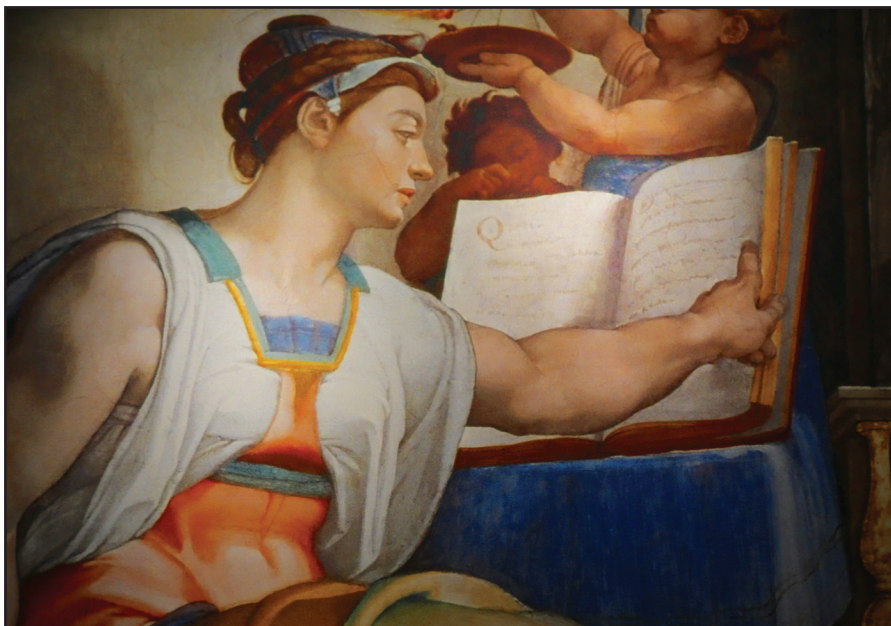
“I thought I was a Biblical scholar, but this shows me how little I still don’t know,” joked Bailey.

The reproductions are displayed across the gallery rooms, giving viewers ample time to view the exhibit at their own pace.

While the Sistine Chapel ceiling is laid out in a specific order, the gallery show has the frescoes grouped thematically, with the scenes of Genesis, prophets and sibyls gathered into different parts of the showroom.

This strategic set-up allows viewers to see Michelangelo’s mental work along with his physical work, as well as his vision for the chapel’s ceiling from the beginning. Beside every reproduction, there is a map showing visitors where the specific fresco lays in the finished product in Rome.

*Editor’s note: Further information about “Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel: The Exhibition,” including ticket prices and viewing hours, is available at <https://chapelsistine.com/exhibits/richmond>.*



Michelangelo’s Erythraean Sibyl depicts the Classical prophetess who fore-casted much of the life of Christ and is referenced in St. Augustine’s “The City of God.” This is one of 34 frescoes in “Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel: The Exhibition,” on display at the Stony Point Fashion Park, Richmond, through Sunday, Oct. 9. (Photo/Emily Jansen)

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professor and writer-in-residence

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# Phoenix Diocese establishes mental health ministry

## Education, accompaniment of suffering focus of pastoral outreach

JEFF GRANT

Catholic News Service

PHOENIX – According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than twice as many people died in 2020 by their own hand than by someone else, and while the annual suicide rate actually dropped in 2019 and 2020 – the last year that figures are available – the rate has risen sharply since 2000.

Once considered a mortal sin that could cost someone salvation, suicide is viewed by the Church today in a much more pastoral way. Along with that development are calls by clergy, clinicians and advocates to bring suicide into the light in the hopes to reduce it and to do more to help those left behind.

On Sunday, Sept. 4, the Diocese of Phoenix took a significant step toward both steps, becoming the latest in a growing number of dioceses across the United States to create an office dedicated to the ministry of mental health.

The announcement – during the diocese’s first Mass of Remembrance for Suicide Victims – came from someone well-acquainted with the issue.

Phoenix Bishop John P. Dolan, who lost both a brother and sister to suicide in separate incidents more than a decade ago, unveiled plans for the new office of Cath-

olic Mental Health Ministry toward the end of his homily at Ss. Simon & Jude Cathedral in Phoenix.

In an interview after the Mass, Bishop Dolan said a diocesan office dedicated to mental health had been a goal of his since his Aug. 2 installment, but its implementation was hastened by a gift from a local foundation, the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust.

Immediately after the bishop’s remarks, members of the congregation who had lost someone to suicide were called to place a single carnation for each departed individual into a basket in front of the cathedral’s Shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

“Ask Our Lady to accompany you with her prayers and to accompany our brothers and sisters who have gone before us, asking the Lord to hold our brothers and sisters in the palm of His hand,” he said.

Bishop Dolan said he and other diocesan leaders were expecting requests to place flowers from around 100-120 individuals. The final number was around 1,200.

“There are a lot of people hurting,” he said.

The bishop said the new office will serve three purposes: education, accompaniment of those



suffering, and advocacy for better policy and funding from government and other sources.

“Educating our fellow Catholic brothers and sisters who may not fully understand the depth of mental health; we accompany those who struggle ... in our parishes so they are not lost but that they know they have a place at the table. And we accompany those who struggle with suicide loss. Those of you who are survivors of loss; hopefully, you know the Church is here, reaching out to you, letting you know you are loved and that your loved ones are not forgotten.”

Each of the diocese’s 15 deaneries will host regular gatherings

where people can share their stories and help one another.

“Finally, the office will promote a spirit of advocacy, offer a voice for those who struggle with mental health and ask those in leadership, our government especially, to make sure mental health is always in the fore of all our discussions,” Bishop Dolan said.

The diocese will provide priests and deacons a mental-health “first-aid kit” to guide them in responding to public requests for help.

“A lot of times our priests don’t have (answers). They don’t have the resources at their fingertips they need,” he explained.

Another key feature will be to inform laity how the Church’s positions on suicide and mental health have developed over the years.

For decades, the Church’s practice was not to celebrate a funeral Mass for someone who had taken his or her own life, owing to the belief that killing is a sin. That is no longer true.

“The Church has grown wiser ... and now understands that grave psychological anxiety can sometimes mitigate – or even remove – a person’s capacity to make decisions and his moral responsibility for those choices,” wrote Father Kenneth Doyle, a now-retired columnist for Catholic News Service, in a 2021 article.

## Christianity

Continued from Page 1

21% of the unaffiliated become Christian.

The other two models are “rising disaffiliation.” One model put limits on the share of Christians who leave the faith at 50%. The other model set no limits on disaffiliation. Under the “rising disaffiliation” scenarios, nones outpace Christians sometime between 2050 and 2060.

Only the no-switching model, which Pew called “counterfactual,” allowed Christianity to retain its U.S. majority. The steady-switching scenario gave Christians a 46%-41% plurality. Under the rising-disaffiliation models, Christianity was relegated to minority status, with less than 40% of all Americans.

### Role of mothers

Pew did four alternative scenarios, in which every mother transmitted their faith to each of her children; if religious groups had equal birth-rates; if immigration stopped after 2030; and if older Christians stopped switching from belief to unaffiliated status. Christianity would lose its majority status but retain plurality status through 2070 under all four scenarios.

“It is possible that events outside the study’s model such as war, economic depression, climate crisis, changing immigration patterns or religious innovations could reverse current religious switching trends, leading to a revival of Christianity in the United States,” the report said.

Pew said that the U.S. experience could

model what’s happened in Europe. “In Great Britain, for example, nones surpassed Christians to become the largest group in 2009, according to the British Social Attitudes Survey,” it noted. “In the Netherlands, disaffiliation accelerated in the 1970s, and 47% of adults now say they are Christian.” The study noted that most disaffiliation ends by the age of 30.

The report focused on sociological trends that played into its projections.

“In this study, transmission rates are calculated based on the share of children who inherit their mother’s religion or their mother’s unaffiliated identity because mothers tend to successfully transmit their religious identities more often than fathers do. Also, roughly a quarter of children under 18 live in single-parent households, which are overwhelmingly headed by mothers,” Pew said.

“The four main scenarios presented here vary primarily in their assumptions about the future of religious switching among Americans between the ages of 15 and 29 which are the years when most religious change happens,” it added. “Only a modest amount of switching is modeled among older adults.”

### Why disaffiliation?

Pew suggested at reasons behind the growing move over the past generation to disaffiliate from Christian denominations.

“In the U.S., an association of Christianity with conservative politics has driven many liberals away from the faith. Still other theories

involve declining trust in religious institutions, clergy scandals, rising rates of religious intermarriage, smaller families, and so on. When asked, Americans give a wide range of reasons for leaving religion behind.”

Men bear some responsibility for the shrinking numbers of Christians, according to the report.

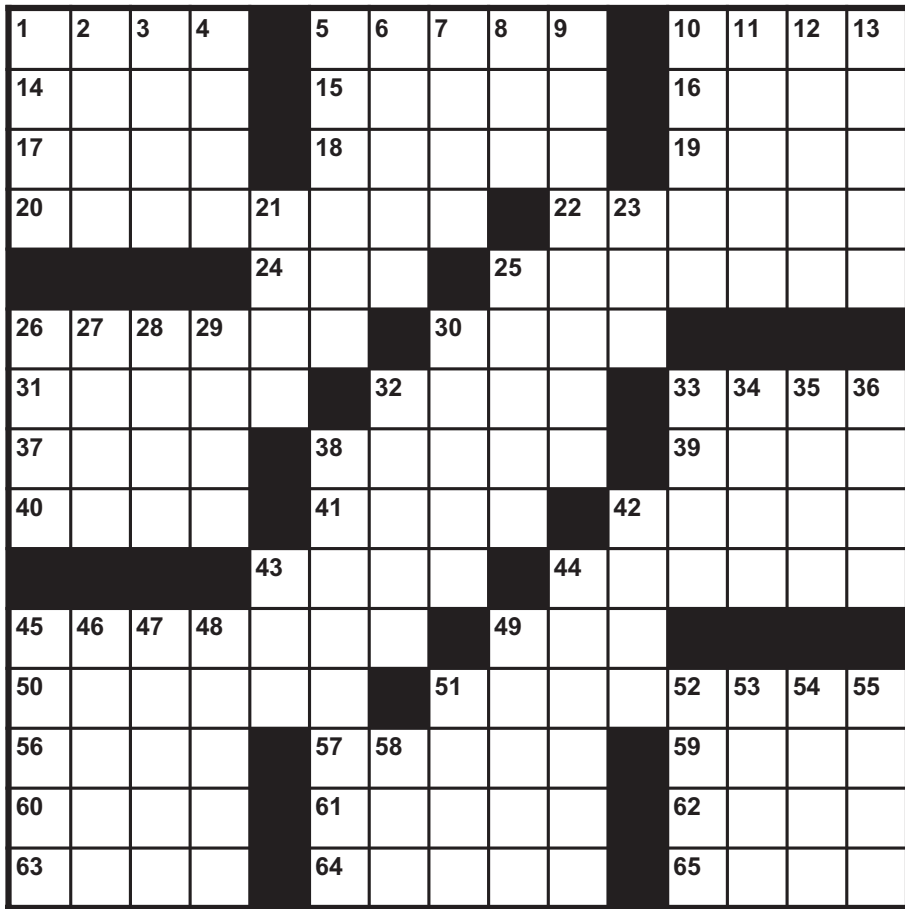
“Americans who have moved away from Christianity are more likely to be men, while women are more likely to retain their Christian identity,” Pew said. “A slight majority of U.S. adults who were raised Christian and are now unaffiliated (54%) are male. Among people who have remained Christian, 57% are women.”

Immigration was once seen as adding more Christians to the U.S. population. “In the 1990s and early 2000s, the largest number of recent arrivals to the U.S. were from Mexico and other Christian-majority countries in Central and South America,” the report said.

“Today, new arrivals are more likely to come from Asia. In 2018, the top country of origin for new immigrants was China (which is majority unaffiliated), followed by India (which is majority Hindu).”

The study issued a conjecture that Christianity could rebound if it falls into minority status if adherents focus on retaining Christian identity, although nones currently show little tendency to join a religion. “While this bottoming out and regrowth of Christianity is theoretically possible,” Pew said, “it would require a reversal of the current trends in switching.”





www.wordgamesforcatholics.com

**ACROSS**

- 1 Eternal \_\_\_\_
- 5 Winner
- 10 Frat letters
- 14 Big rabbit features
- 15 Egyptian handmaiden
- 16 Teen scourge
- 17 Muslim titles of honor
- 18 Blow on the cheek delivered by the bishop at Confirmation
- 19 Bank contents
- 20 Hilton or Trump
- 22 Biblical mount
- 24 Some
- 25 Church spire
- 26 Meetings of bishops
- 30 Judge who had thirty sons who rode thirty donkeys (Judg 10:4)
- 31 Not hesitant
- 32 Baby powder
- 33 Small secluded valley
- 37 Record
- 38 Compel
- 39 \_\_\_\_ of Christian Initiation
- 40 Cries of discovery
- 41 Vex
- 42 Jewish month of Passover
- 43 Taxis
- 44 Nun's headdress
- 45 Offense
- 49 OT prophetic book
- 50 Enthusiastic
- 51 Not for the dry cleaner
- 56 Vigor
- 57 Notre Dame nickname, "The Fighting \_\_\_\_"
- 59 Sign on again
- 60 It's in the dictionary now
- 61 Nick of "Cape Fear"
- 62 Game of chance
- 63 Henpecks
- 64 Patron saint of hermits
- 65 Former JFK arrivals

**DOWN**

- 1 Her eyes were described in the Bible
- 2 The villain in Othello
- 3 Campus org.
- 4 Being (Lt.)
- 5 August 1, Feast of St. Peter in \_\_\_\_
- 6 Catholic actor of "The Wizard of Oz" fame
- 7 Culture medium
- 8 Chart
- 9 Custom
- 10 \_\_\_\_ Pio
- 11 Rascal
- 12 Big name in chips
- 13 Chicago Eight defendant
- 21 Our \_\_\_\_ of Lourdes
- 23 Air (comb.)
- 25 "\_\_\_\_ Regina"
- 26 Mlle. across the Pyrenees
- 27 Okay
- 28 Soft lambskin leather
- 29 Lyric poems
- 30 Alcatraz, and others
- 32 Reuben or Gad, for example
- 33 Harsh
- 34 Speech defect
- 35 And others (abbr.)
- 36 Hawaiian goose
- 38 Hauling
- 42 Near
- 43 Metal container
- 44 Does the laundry
- 45 Pope (II) who called for the Crusades
- 46 Saint Goretti
- 47 Come with
- 48 Tumults
- 49 Speed
- 51 "Thy \_\_\_\_ be done..."
- 52 Holy holders
- 53 Busy ones
- 54 Fontanne's theater partner
- 55 Epic poetry
- 58 King of France

Answers on page 16

## Correction

In the Sept. 5 edition of The Catholic Virginian, Father Kevin Segerblom was incorrectly identified as the pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Salem, in a photo that accompanied the Knights of Columbus wheelchair blessing story. Father Segerblom is the pastor of St. Andrew, Roanoke, and gave the blessing as episcopal vicar of the Western Vicariate. Father Danny Cogut is pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

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more information.



## Local theaters to show religious movies

Movie theaters in cities within the Diocese of Richmond will be showing two films from Fathom Events' Saints Series.

On Thursday Sept. 29, the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel, "Saint Michael: Meet the Angel" will be shown.

On Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 3 and 4, "Mother Teresa: No Greater Love" will be shown.

Details about the movies, trailers and list of locations

where they will be shown can be found at [www.fathomevents.com](http://www.fathomevents.com).

The Knights of Columbus produced "Mother Teresa: No Greater Love," which had its international premiere at the Vatican Wednesday, Aug. 31, and its U.S. premiere Sunday, Sept. 11, at the St. John Paul II National Shrine in Washington.

## Pope

*Continued from Page 2*

new meeting time.

Asked if Patriarch Kirill was still bothered by Pope Francis' comment in May to an Italian newspaper that "the patriarch cannot turn himself into Putin's altar boy," the metropolitan said, "I can say it was something very unexpected, this interview, and it is clear that expressions of this kind are not helpful for Christian unity."

In his formal talk to the congress, Pope Francis said that "authentic religiosity" is needed to fight fundamentalism and extremism in religion and to show the world that it has no reason to distrust or have "contempt for religion as if it were a destabilizing force in modern society."

Kazakhstan and other nations of the former Soviet Union "are all too familiar with the legacy of decades of state-imposed atheism: that oppressive and stifling mentality for which the mere mention of the word 'religion' was greeted

with embarrassed silence," the pope said.

Religion, he said, "is not a problem, but part of the solution for a more harmonious life in society."

Focusing on the meeting's theme, which reflected on the role of religious leaders "in the spiritual and social development of mankind in the post-pandemic period," Pope Francis said the COVID-19 pandemic was among several challenges that "call all of us — and in a special way the religions — to greater unity of purpose."

"COVID-19 put us all in the same boat," he said. "All of us felt vulnerable, all of us in need of help, none of us completely independent, none completely self-sufficient."

Now, he said, religions must not squander "the sense of solidarity" or act as "if nothing happened."

Instead, the pope said, religious leaders must confront the urgent needs of the world and be "promoters of unity amid the grave

challenges that risk dividing our human family even further."

With the world "plagued by the scourge of war, by a climate of hostility and confrontation, by an inability to step back and hold out a hand to the other," he said, it is time for religions to purify themselves from evil, particularly the "presumption of feeling self-righteous, with no need to learn anything from anyone."

"Let us free ourselves of those reductive and destructive notions that offend the name of God by harshness, extremism and forms of fundamentalism, and profane it through hatred, fanaticism and terrorism, disfiguring the image of man as well," he said.

"And let us learn also to be ashamed: yes, to experience that healthy shame born of compassion for those who suffer, sympathy and concern for their condition and for their fate, which we realize that we too share," he said.

*Follow Arocho on Twitter: @archoju*

## Lee

*Continued from Page 1*

opportunity.

"We talk about this as a vocation, and there definitely was a calling," Lee said. "God was definitely tapping me on the shoulder as he had done many times, and this was one of the times I answered in the right way. I'd answered before, but not always in the right way."

The calling in 2016 was to her parish, St. Mary, Richmond, to be director of evangelization.

"It was something completely different, working exclusively in adult formation. That was a very different role, something I could craft. It was a new position," she said. "In six years, it became different from when I started."

When Emily Filippi, a religious educator for 50 years, including 30 as director of the Diocese of Richmond's Office of Christian Formation, announced her retirement earlier this year, Lee did not apply for the position immediately.

"I really had to think about it. It was quite a discernment process. I had some things going on in my life, personal things," she said. "I really needed to be able to focus on what this position was going to mean for me and for the diocese. It impacted a lot of people. I knew I could do the job, but I had to decide whether this is

what I really wanted to do."

### Support for leaders

Her more than 15 years of parish experience are a factor in how Lee is approaching her job.

"Understanding that the leaders in the parishes have a lot of demands on their time and their energy, we have to be very respectful of that and make sure that what we are offering them is quality — and it is," she said.

Working "efficiently" with them is imperative, Lee said.

"It's not about what we think they need, it's about what they actually need. It's about being available to answer their questions and provide resources for them," she said. "When we're looking at programming we want to do for the leaders, we need to consider if this is conflicting with the busiest time in their parishes."

Lee added that her office is cognizant that there are parishes with limited financial resources.

"We're here to advocate for them and help them, not be a burden," she said.

Lee referenced the mentoring she received from Sister Bernadette in noting a goal for her office.

"I had somebody who recognized the talents that I had and helped me develop those, gave me the resources to do that," she said. "What we want to do is create

leaders who know that we understand how smart they are, how talented they are, give them the resources they need so that they have these thriving ministries in their parishes."

### 'Create together'

Lee's plans for the office include expanding what exists, e.g., the LEARN Portal, but focusing on other areas, too.

"A big area is connecting to Spanish-speaking people in our parishes. We're working toward having a bilingual associate director because it's very important that we have one," she said. "That will give us the ability to communicate to a significant population in our diocese."

Another priority is to spend time meeting with parish leaders in the western part of the diocese.

"Heralds of Faith (held for the first time last year in Roanoke) was a way for Bishop Knestout to be with the catechists. We need to go out and into the parishes and really understand what they need — what's going on in their parishes and what can we do, what do they need from our office," she said.

Lee wants parish leaders to turn to her office and say, "Can you help us with this?"

"Whatever it is, we can respond and say, 'Yes, let's do this together. Let's create this together,'" she said.

## Disarmament

*Continued from Page 4*

understand it as the road to complete, verifiable, global nuclear disarmament," Baggarly said.

Baggarly said encouraging the TPNW gives him something to work for rather than just fighting against.

HRCAN members have spoken before Newport News, Portsmouth and Norfolk city councils urging them to pass ICAN's Cities Appeal. According to ICAN, five states, three counties and more than 60 cities in the U.S. have signed to urge their governments to join TPNW.

Although none of those Hampton Roads councils have voted on the appeal yet, nor have Virginia or any of its cities signed it, Early hopes that the resolution will be effective.

"The Cities Appeal gives me hope because you get the people with the right heart on city councils that can make a difference," Early said. "If all the cities and states signed on, the legislators in that state would have to really look at it, right? So that's cool. That's the kind of forward movement I see, but you really need people that keep drumming the drum and keep you thinking about it."

### Vigils, advocacy

The group has spoken with staffers of Virginia's U.S. Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner in an effort of convincing them to become the first U.S. senators to sign ICAN's Legislator's Pledge, which Baggarly explained "commits the signer to champion the TPNW however they can in their legislative milieu."

"The role of government, the role of our senators and representatives, is to keep us safe, and the best way to keep us safe is to get rid of these nuclear weapons," said HRCAN member Jim DellaValle, member of Immaculate Conception Parish, Hampton.

HRCAN also takes its efforts to the streets by holding vigils and marches at Newport News Shipyard and Norfolk Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth. Their next rally is planned for Monday, Sept. 26, in Norfolk outside Wells Fargo and Bank of America at Colonial Ave. and 21st St.

Other advocacy efforts have included passing out leaflets to people, writing letters to the CEOs of Newport News Shipyard and mailing information to local pastors in hopes they will address nuclear disarmament in their homilies.

HRCAN members realize that nuclear disarmament isn't going to happen overnight.

"We know this is a long-haul thing because it is education," Baggarly said.

*For information on HRCAN's meetings and upcoming events, email [williamsbaggarly@gmail.com](mailto:williamsbaggarly@gmail.com).*



## OPPORTUNITIES

**The Catholic Diocese of Richmond** is seeking a coordinator of campus ministry to serve the Catholic campus ministries at Norfolk State University and Hampton University. Norfolk State University is a public, historically black university with an enrollment of over 5,000 students. Hampton University is a private, historically black, research university with enrollment of almost 5,000 students. The coordinator of campus ministry is responsible for the development, implementation and oversight of a campus ministry program for the students of both Norfolk State University and Hampton University. These responsibilities include developing student leaders, pastorally responding to student needs, and overseeing student programs and activities. Additionally, the coordinator oversees financial accounts and serves as the liaison between the local Catholic parishes.

**Qualifications:** Must be a practicing Catholic in good standing. A minimum of a bachelor's degree is required with a master's degree preferred (in a relevant field). 3-5 years of prior experience in pastoral work, preferably campus ministry. This is a 30 hour/week, non-exempt, hourly position. Pay is commensurate with experience and diocesan pay scale. Interested applicants apply at <https://bit.ly/3txeIDq>.

**Office Manager** St. Elizabeth Church, a small, dynamic and diverse parish in the heart of Richmond, located in the Highland Park area, is seeking a part-time (10-15 hours/week) office manager. The office manager must work well with others, have computer skills, including knowledge of Microsoft applications, and will be in charge of keeping track of parish records, sacramental records, VIRTUS information, ordering supplies and keeping the office environment maintained. The parish office hours are Tuesday through Friday, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Please contact Father Jim Arsenault at [jarsenault@richmond-diocese.org](mailto:jarsenault@richmond-diocese.org) to apply.

**St. Ann Parish, Ashland**, has an immediate opening for a full-time (33 hours per week M-Th 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m., F 9 a.m. – noon) administrative assistant responsible for performing a wide range of clerical/administrative duties. The qualified candidate should be Roman Catholic with knowledge of the Catholic Church, sacraments and liturgies, should enjoy working with people in a friendly and welcoming manner, must possess the ability to work independently as well as collaboratively.

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to: answering phones; greeting walk-ins; managing the

parish calendar; maintaining/updating parish website; preparation of bulletins, worship aids, prayers of the faithful; coordinating volunteers; registering parishioners in ParishSoft; and updating sacramental records in accordance with diocesan guidelines.

The selected individual must be proficient in Microsoft Office Suite for Business, knowledge of ParishSoft (will train), must have strong communication skills, be organized and able to perform in a busy office environment. Interested candidates should please send a cover letter, résumé and completed diocesan application to Father Jim Gordon at [office@stannsc.org](mailto:office@stannsc.org).

## SHORTTAKES

**Prayer, Praise and Worship**, with Charismatic Expression, Sunday, Sept. 25, 3-5 p.m., St. Clare of Assisi Retreat Center, 620 Buckroe Ave., Hampton. Call Sherry, 757-814-1706, for more information.

**St. Charles Parish** will be sponsoring a family-friendly Oktoberfest, Saturday, Oct. 1. Join us for craft beer, wine, bratwurst, hot dogs, popcorn, games, raffles, music and more! Bring the family and enjoy an afternoon of fun! Located at 545 Randolph Ave., Cape Charles (on the Eastern Shore). Proceeds from this event will help to preserve our beautiful church that was built in 1886! Admission includes two beverages and a meal. Advance ticket prices are \$30 for adults, \$15 for ages 12-20 and non-drinkers, kids under 12 are free. Day of event ticket prices are \$40 and \$20. Tickets may be purchased at [www.oktoberfeststcharles.eventbrite.com](http://www.oktoberfeststcharles.eventbrite.com).

**St. Olaf Catholic Church**, in coordination with other churches, invites all to participate in the 34th National Life Chain on Sunday, Oct. 2, 2-3:15 p.m. This will be the Greater Williamsburg area's 10th annual Life Chain. Location will be on the sidewalk facing Richmond Road starting at Centerville Road. The Life Chain is a peaceful, prayerful and public witness of pro-life faithful standing in honor of more than 60 million lives lost to abortion. Pro-Life signs will be available, and you may bring a chair if need be. Extend this invitation to your friends as well.

**Trinity Organ Concert:** Join Jeremy Garnett and St. Bede associate director of music, Carina Brackin, for an exciting concert of works for trumpet and organ on Wednesday, Oct. 5, noon. Catch the glittering passagework of Vivaldi transformed by the master J. S. Bach, glide into a new season of the year with Carson Cooman's Solstice Sonata inspired by the longest day of the year, and enjoy

the exciting virtuosity presented in Ernst Sachse's Concertino in E flat. This free concert will be held in person in the nave at St. Bede Catholic Church, 3686 Ironbound Road, Williamsburg, and online at [www.facebook.com/MusicofSaintBede](http://www.facebook.com/MusicofSaintBede). For more information, call 757-229-3631 or visit [www.bede.va.org/concerts](http://www.bede.va.org/concerts).

**From Darkness to the Light of Christ.** A spiritual workshop for those who experience mental illness, journey with a loved one or friend who has a mental illness, for those that want to know more about hope about mental illness and for professionals who work in the field of mental health. Join us Sunday, Oct. 9, 3-5 p.m., St. John Catholic Church, 813 West Nine Mile Road, Highland Springs. For more information, contact Mary alyce@cox.net.

**Second Annual Golf Scramble.** Still seeking sponsorships. For \$75, people can join us on the 19th hole for cocktails/music/friendship/food and more! All proceeds will go toward a scholarship at Benedictine in honor of O. Ralph Puccinelli Jr. Friday, Oct. 21, 11 a.m., Richmond Country Club. All donations welcome. Email Luke Puccinelli at [luke@puccinellimanagement.com](mailto:luke@puccinellimanagement.com) if you would like to sponsor or donate. Find the registration form at [www.orpuccinellifoundation.com](http://www.orpuccinellifoundation.com)

**Join Monsignor Patrick Golden** on a pilgrimage to Scotland and Ireland, May 16-28, 2023, for a profoundly moving spiritual experience. This is a 13-day tour for \$4,899, including: airfare, 4-star hotels, daily Mass, local tours, breakfast and dinner, and much more! Some places on the itinerary include Blarney Castle; the Ring of Kerry; Knock, where our Blessed Mother appeared in 1879; and Dublin. The tour then moves to Edinburgh, which will serve as a base for trips outside the city to explore Scottish history and natural beauty. For further information, please contact Alba Kim at [tours@albastours.com](mailto:tours@albastours.com) or 804-298-4035. Visit our website [albastours.com](http://albastours.com). Reservations are available now. Spaces are limited.

**Eucharistic chapel is open at the Abbey!** The bishops of the United States have undertaken a three-year grassroots revival of devotion to and belief in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. This revival officially started on the Feast of Corpus Christi, June 16, 2022. At the heart of the Eucharistic Revival is a call for every parish to reflect on its devotion to the Real Presence of Christ. All the faithful are welcome to spend some time with our Lord. The adoration chapel at Mary Mother of the Church Benedictine Abbey, 12829

River Rd., Goochland, is open daily from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. Please call Benedictine Brother Jeffery Williams at 804-708-9673 for the door code, and please keep us in your prayers as we do for you and your loved ones.

**Oblates of St. Benedict.** Looking for balance in your life? Want time for prayer as well as work and home life? Since the sixth century, everyday people have found the Rule of St. Benedict a practical tool for a way of life rich in spiritual nourishment and balance. Benedictine oblates (lay people) live in the world but enjoy a spiritual community life with a Benedictine monastery near them. Meetings start this fall. To learn more, please contact Sister Andrea Westkamp, Benedictine Sisters of Virginia, at 571-428-2510 or [awestkamp@osbva.org](mailto:awestkamp@osbva.org), or Kathy Frick at 703-393-2485 or [katherinefrick@hotmail.com](mailto:katherinefrick@hotmail.com).

**The Catholic Woman's Club (CWC)**, a diocesan-wide organization founded in 1914, will host an Open House and New Members Tea event on Monday, Sept. 26, 11:30 a.m., at The Columbian Center, 2324 Pump Road, Richmond. What a wonderful opportunity to learn about the history of the CWC and their charitable projects. Please contact Carol Valentine at [carolvalentine@gmail.com](mailto:carolvalentine@gmail.com). Please RSVP as soon as possible.

**End of Life Planning.** The Diocese of Richmond, through the Office for Evangelization, invites you to join us for a half-day seminar on planning for the end of life. This practical seminar will look at funeral planning, spiritual preparation, wills and trusts, legacy giving, and advance medical directives. It's an opportunity to hear about what you can do to help get your affairs in order and to plan. The seminar will be offered in-person on Wednesday, Nov. 16, at the Pastoral Center in Richmond from 9 a.m. – noon. We will offer a virtual option for those unable to attend in person. Learn more and register at [evangelizerichmond.org/events/end-of-life-planning](http://evangelizerichmond.org/events/end-of-life-planning).

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# Francisco: Para tomar buenas decisiones, hay que escuchar el propio corazón

En la Audiencia General de este miércoles 7 de septiembre, el Santo Padre impartió su segunda catequesis en el ciclo dedicado al discernimiento, que comenzó el pasado 31 de agosto.

SEBASTIÁN SANSÓN FERRARI — CIUDAD DEL VATICANO

Bajo una soleada mañana de verano en Roma, este miércoles 7 de septiembre la Audiencia General volvió a la Plaza de San Pedro, en la que se vivió un clima de fiesta, con la alegre presencia de numerosos fieles y peregrinos de distintas partes del mundo.

Francisco pronunció su segunda catequesis en la serie sobre el discernimiento, inspirándose en el ejemplo de San Ignacio de Loyola, cuando, en un “episodio decisivo de su vida”, Ignacio se encuentra en casa convaleciente, después de haber sido herido en batalla en una pierna. Para liberarse del aburrimiento pide leer algo. “A él, dice el Papa, le encantaban los cuentos de caballería, pero lamentablemente en casa había solo vidas de santos”.

Y agrega: “Un poco a regañadientes se adapta, pero durante la lectura comienza a descubrir otro mundo, un mundo que lo conquista y parece competir con el de los caballeros. Se queda fascinado por las figuras de San Francisco y de Santo Domingo y siente el deseo de imitarles. Pero también el mundo caballeresco sigue ejerciendo su fascinación sobre él. Y así siente dentro de sí esta alternancia de pensamientos, los caballerescos y los de santos, que parecen ser equivalentes”.

## La experiencia de San Ignacio

El Obispo de Roma se detiene en un fragmento de la autobiografía de San Ignacio, quien escribe:

“Pensando en aquello del mundo -y en las cosas caballerescas, se entiende-, se deleitaba mucho; más cuando después de cansado lo dejaba, hallábase seco y descontento; y cuando en ir a Jerusalén descalzo, y en no comer sino yerbas, y en hacer todos los demás rigores que veía haber hecho los santos; no solamente se consolaba cuando estaba en los tales pensamientos, más aún después de dejando, quedaba contento y alegre, un rastro de alegría dejó aquello (n. 8).”

## Dos aspectos de la historia de Ignacio

Francisco desglosa dos rasgos de la experiencia de Ignacio: el primero, el tiempo. Marca un



El Papa Francisco saluda a la multitud durante la audiencia general en la Plaza de San Pedro en el Vaticano el 7 de septiembre de 2022. (Foto del CNS/Paul Haring)

contrapunto entre los pensamientos del mundo, que al principio son atractivos, pero después pierden brillo y dejan vacío, descontento, mientras que los de Dios suscitan al inicio una cierta resistencia, pero cuando se les acoge, trae una paz desconocida, que perdura.

El segundo elemento es el punto de llegada de los pensamientos: “Al principio, la situación no parece tan clara. Hay un desarrollo del discernimiento: entendemos qué es el bien para nosotros no de forma abstracta, general, sino en el recorrido de nuestra vida”.

En las reglas para el discernimiento, fruto de esta experiencia fundamental, Ignacio pone una premisa importante, que ayuda a comprender tal proceso: «En las personas que van de pecado mortal en pecado mortal, acostumbra comúnmente el enemigo proponerles placeres aparentes, haciéndoles imaginar deleites y placeres de los sentidos, para conservarlos y hacerlos crecer más en sus vicios y pecados; en dichas personas el buen espíritu actúa de modo contrario, punzándoles y remordiéndoles la conciencia por el juicio recto de la razón» (Ejercicios Espirituales, 314).

## El discernimiento no es una especie de oráculo o fatalismo

El Obispo de Roma puntualiza que “hay una historia que precede al que discierne, una his-

toria que es indispensable conocer, porque el discernimiento no es una especie de oráculo o fatalismo o una cosa de laboratorio, ¡no!, como echar la suerte con dos posibilidades”.

“Las grandes preguntas surgen cuando ya hemos hecho un tramo en la vida, y es a ese tramo al que debemos volver para entender lo que buscamos. Si en la vida vamos un poco por ahí, ahí: “¿Pero por qué estoy caminando en esta dirección, ¿qué estoy buscando?”, y ahí se produce el discernimiento”.

Francisco insiste, como lo ha hecho en reiteradas ocasiones, que para saber qué pasa, qué decisión tomar, para juzgar una situación, hay que escuchar el propio corazón. Recuerda que “escuchamos la televisión, la radio, el teléfono móvil, somos maestros de la escucha, pero te pregunto: ‘¿Sabes escuchar tu propio corazón? ¿Te paras y dices: ‘Pero cómo está mi corazón? ¿Está satisfecho, está triste, busca algo?’”.

## Dios trabaja en los eventos no programados y en los contratiempos

Hacia el final de la catequesis, el Santo Padre recuerda la importancia de desarrollar la capacidad de discernir qué nos dice Dios a través de los imprevistos: “Se supone que iba a salir a caminar y tengo un problema en el pie, no puedo... Contratiempo, ¿qué te dice Dios? ¿Qué te dice la vida allí?”.

# El Papa: Estamos viviendo una guerra mundial, ¡detengámonos!

Un llamamiento, casi un grito del Pontífice en la Plaza de San Pedro dirigido a los fieles que la abarrotan con motivo de la audiencia general, pero en realidad dirigido a toda la humanidad para que cada uno se sienta llamado a su responsabilidad como constructor de la paz.

GABRIELLA CERASO — CIUDAD DEL VATICANO

En Ucrania se cumplen 196 días de guerra, “la tierra sigue temblando y el pueblo ucraniano llora”, dijo el jefe de la Iglesia greco-católica ucraniana, Su Beatitud Sviatoslav Shevchuk en su último mensaje, refiriéndose a los combates que continúan en las regiones de Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk. Y el Papa Francisco vuelve con la mirada allí, lo hace una vez más durante la audiencia general en la Plaza de San Pedro donde también

ve, entre la multitud, banderas con los colores amarillo y azul de la tierra ucraniana:

*Y no me olvido de la atormentada Ucrania. Allí hay banderas*

Sus palabras se convierten inmediatamente en un llamamiento, casi un grito, que llama a la responsabilidad de todos porque, como ya había dicho el miércoles pasado en la audiencia general, la guerra es ahora mundial:

*Frente a todos los escenarios de guerra de nuestro tiempo, pido a cada uno que sea constructor de paz y rece para que se difundan en el mundo pensamientos y proyectos de concordia y reconciliación. Hoy estamos viviendo una guerra mundial, ¡detengámonos, por favor!*



Una mujer ucraniana carga a un perro mientras mira a un edificio residencial dañado después de un ataque militar de Rusia en Kramatorsk, Ucrania, en esta foto de archivo del 31 de agosto de 2022. (Foto del CNS/Ammar Awad, Reuters)



# Church leaders praise, pray for Queen Elizabeth II

**SIMON CALDWELL**  
Catholic News Service

MANCHESTER, England — Catholics in the U.K. paid tribute to Queen Elizabeth II following her death Sept. 8 and the end of a reign that lasted more than 70 years.

Pope Francis sent a telegram addressed “To His Majesty the King, Charles III,” her son who immediately ascended to the throne.

“I willingly join all who mourn her loss in praying for the late queen’s eternal rest and in paying tribute to her life of unstinting service to the good of the nation and the Commonwealth, her example of devotion to duty, her steadfast witness of faith in Jesus Christ and her firm hope in his promises,” Pope Francis said.

The British sovereign died “peacefully” at Balmoral, the royal residence in Scotland, surrounded by members of her family. She was 96.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster, president of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, paid tribute using many of the queen’s own words.

“On 21 April 1947, on her 21st birthday, Princess Elizabeth said, ‘I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service,’” Cardinal Nichols said. “Now, 75 years later, we are heartbroken in our loss at her death and so full of admiration for the unfailing way in which she fulfilled that declaration.”

“Even in my sorrow, shared with so many around the world, I am filled with an immense sense of gratitude for the gift to the world



**Britain’s Queen Elizabeth II talks with Pope Francis during a meeting at the Vatican in this April 3, 2014, file photo. Queen Elizabeth died Sept. 8, 2022, at the age of 96.** (CNS photo/Maria Grazia Picciarella, pool)

that has been the life of Queen Elizabeth II,” he said. “At this time, we pray for the repose of the soul of Her Majesty. We do so with confidence, because the Christian faith marked every day of her life and activity.”

The cardinal quoted Queen Elizabeth’s Christmas message from 2000, in which she said the teachings of Christ and her own “personal accountability before God” gave her a framework of how to live, and that Christ’s words and example offered her “great comfort in difficult times.”

Cardinal Nichols said: “This faith, so often and so eloquently proclaimed in her public messages, has been an inspiration to me, and I am sure to many. The wisdom, stability and service which she consistently embodied, often in circumstances of extreme

difficulty, are a shining legacy and testament to her faith.”

He also offered prayers “for His Majesty the King, as he assumes his new office, even as he mourns his mother. God save the king.”

Bishop Hugh Gilbert, president of the Bishops’ Conference of Scotland, praised Queen Elizabeth for her life of “outstanding and dedicated public service.”

“Her determination to remain active to the end of her long life has been an example of Christian leadership, which demonstrated her great stoicism and commitment to duty and was undoubtedly a source of stability and continuity in times of great change,” he said. “Scotland’s Catholic bishops will remember her in our prayers and pray for all those who mourn her loss.”

Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury said: “As we grieve together, we know that, in losing our beloved queen, we have lost the person whose steadfast loyalty, service and humility has helped us make sense of who we are through decades of extraordinary change in our world, nation and society.”

Queen Elizabeth died 17 months after the death of her husband, Philip, who died in April 2021 at age 99. Her 73-year marriage to Philip was the longest of any British sovereign.

The U.K. has entered a 10-day period of mourning.

Elizabeth was born on April 26, 1926, to Prince Albert, Duke of York, and Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon.

She acceded to the throne Feb. 6, 1952, and during her coronation in Westminster Abbey June 2, 1953, Queen Elizabeth was open about her Christian faith.

“When I spoke to you last, at Christmas, I asked you all, whatever your religion, to pray for me on the day of my coronation — to pray that God would give me

wisdom and strength to carry out the promises that I should then be making,” the queen said in her address. “Throughout this memorable day, I have been uplifted and sustained by the knowledge that your thoughts and prayers were with me.”

The accession of 1952 made 2022 the year when the world’s oldest monarch and the longest-serving monarch in British history celebrated the platinum jubilee of her reign — the point when Elizabeth had sat on the British throne for 70 years.

The queen was able to witness the celebrations in her honor but handed all of her public duties to her nearest relatives. Her final act of office was to receive Prime Minister Liz Truss in Scotland, Sept. 6, when she was also last photographed.

Fourteen prime ministers served during her reign, beginning with Sir Winston Churchill. Truss was the 15th to greet her in that office.

During her reign, Queen Elizabeth met with four popes — Francis, Benedict, John Paul II and John XXIII, and as princess she met Pope Pius XII.

The queen sometimes joked about her longevity, once quoting Groucho Marx, saying: “Anyone can get old. All you have to do is live long enough.”

She served as a constitutional monarch — the British head of state and Commonwealth — the supreme governor of the Church of England and head of the British armed forces.

In her private life, she was a mother four children, a grandmother of eight, and a great-grandmother of 11 children.

Following her death, King Charles said in a statement: “The death of my beloved mother, Her Majesty the Queen, is a moment of the greatest sadness for me and all members of my family.

“We mourn profoundly the passing of a cherished sovereign and a much-loved mother. I know her loss will be deeply felt throughout the country, the Realms and the Commonwealth, and by countless people around the world.”

## More pregnancy support in Virginia Beach



**Bishop Barry C. Knestout provides remarks prior to dedicating and blessing Hope 4 Life’s new mobile pregnancy resource van and ultrasound machine at St. Gregory the Great, Virginia Beach, Saturday, Sept. 3, 2022. The van was purchased with funds raised by St. Benedict Knights of Columbus Council #9056, and the ultrasound machine was provided by the Supreme Council. At the time of the blessing, the van had already saved over 1,000 babies. Hope 4 Life also supports new mothers and families after the baby is born.** (Photo/Mike Carlson)

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